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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is submitted in support of General Assembly resolution 59/296, in section VI, paragraph 5, of which the Assembly stressed the need for increased cooperation and coordination between multiple actors both within and outside the United Nations.

In the report, the Secretary-General discusses, in particular, an increased engagement of the United Nations in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes in complex peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping operations over the past five years, including lessons learned from these operations. The Secretary-General also discusses the development of a new approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within the United Nations system, based on the lessons learned.

This new policy approach, referred to as the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards, was created by the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, comprising 15 United Nations agencies, departments, funds and programmes. The standards provide a comprehensive set of policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures on all aspects of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. They emphasize: a people-centred approach, stressing the inclusion of intended participants' and beneficiaries' specific needs in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programming; a flexible, transparent and accountable approach; an integrated approach centred on the principles of integration, especially in the area of programme planning and implementation; and a national ownership centred approach, encouraging Governments and citizens in post-conflict countries to take on responsibility for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programming.

* The slot date allocated for the present report was 17 February 2006. The submission was late owing to the extensive inter-agency consultative process.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 59/296 of 22 June 2005, the General Assembly stressed the need for strengthened cooperation and coordination between the various actors within and outside the United Nations system to ensure both the effective use of resources and coherence on the ground in implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. The Assembly also noted my intention to submit to the Assembly at its sixtieth session the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards that were being developed by the United Nations system. The present report therefore aims to provide an overview of the United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration which has informed the development of the standards and to make recommendations on how to operationalize this approach in United Nations peacekeeping operations and, ultimately, in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in non-peacekeeping environments.

II. Review of the United Nations engagement in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration since 2000

2. Since the issuance of my report on the role of United Nations peacekeeping in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration on 11 February 2000 (S/2000/101), six peacekeeping operations have included disarmament, demobilization and reintegration as part of their mandate. These are: the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC); the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI); the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB); the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH); and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS).

3. Some of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration functions that the Security Council has requested these operations to implement have included: the provision of security for the programmes; collecting, securing and destroying weapons; carrying out disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; contributing to the dismantling of militia groups; enhancing regional and cross-border approaches, including identification, disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of foreign ex-combatants; and supporting national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

4. The past five years have also seen an increased engagement of the United Nations in countries where peacekeeping operations have not been deployed by the Organization, such as Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Indonesia (Aceh), the Niger, the Congo, Somalia, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

5. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other agencies, funds, departments and programmes of the United Nations system have also played a key role in supporting the development of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, strategies and the implementation of a variety of activities, such as establishing counselling and referral services to ex-combatants and their dependants; ensuring that reintegration options are available; promoting sensitization campaigns and meeting the specific needs of women, youth, children

and persons with disabilities and chronic illnesses associated with armed forces or groups.

6. The United Nations is particularly committed to demobilizing and removing children used by armed forces and groups in situations of ongoing conflict, in conformity with international norms and standards, notably the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. In Afghanistan, for instance, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is conducting a programme to demobilize 4,000 children between 14 and 17 years of age. Similar programmes are also being implemented in Sri Lanka and Uganda.

7. While the scale, complexity, scope and type of the United Nations work in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration have changed, our means of planning and implementing such operations have not. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration have often been conducted in a fractured way, resulting in poor coordination and sometimes competition between and among peacekeeping operations, agencies, funds and programmes, which have often worked independently from one another. At best, this has resulted in disjointed programmes with large gaps between the various components. At worst, it has led to disillusioned ex-combatants returning to arms as was the case in Sierra Leone and in Haiti.

8. The narrow focus on short-term security goals has often led to the exclusion of key target groups from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, such as women combatants, supporters and dependants, as was evidenced by evaluations of United Nations-led programmes in Sierra Leone and Liberia, among others.[1] The national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes of both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi failed to take into consideration the category of women associated with fighting forces who played the roles of porters, cooks and sex slaves in the conflict. The only avenue now open to ensuring women's participation remains at the reintegration stage and efforts are ongoing to ensure this. In Liberia, the change in the eligibility criteria to include women associated with fighting forces provided, for the first time, greater accessibility by women to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, thus ensuring inclusion of over 20,000 women.

A. Lessons learned

9. As a result of the United Nations engagement in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, a number of important lessons have been learned that have informed the Organization's thinking on how to approach this process. These are:

(a) Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration cannot be implemented in isolation from the broader peacebuilding and recovery process. It is vital that these programmes are coordinated with the wider peace, recovery and development frameworks;

(b) Successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are contingent on the political will of all parties to the conflict. The international community should work to ensure that detailed provisions for disarmament, demobilization and

reintegration are included in such agreements and that signatories respect any commitments they may make to be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated. It is important to point out in this regard that, in order to achieve success, the political process needs to drive the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, rather than the other way around;

(c) The disarmament, demobilization and in particular the reintegration processes extend beyond the life of a peacekeeping operation. The Organization needs to assist in the development of national capacities to take on key components once a peacekeeping mission is drawn down;

(d) A fragmented approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within the United Nations system will undermine the success of the peace process. An integrated approach is therefore the only way forward;

(e) There is a need to capture systematically lessons learned from previous disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and to ensure that the lessons are rigorously applied in future operations;

(f) Integrated planning and programmes will require establishing integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units. This in turn depends on a change in the culture of the departments, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system towards shared goals and increased integration and cooperation;

(g) There is a need to formalize the establishment of integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units, for example, through letters of agreement that lay out administrative and financial procedures to be followed, as well as in the responsibilities of the participating parties;

(h) Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration must also be planned in close coordination with transitional processes to review and reform the rule of law and security sectors, as well as efforts to control and reduce small arms proliferation;

(i) The sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants is a key objective of this process and, in many cases, a cornerstone of a consolidated, successful peace process. Reintegration programmes have too often been poorly planned and financed. Planning for reintegration should start as early as possible, match market demand and be planned in coordination with ongoing recovery and development programmes;

(j) Timely, reliable and coordinated funding is vital to the success of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. Voluntary contributions are an important source of funds, especially for the reintegration component, but in most cases there is a six- to eight-month gap from the time funds are pledged to the time they are available for use. The failure to follow through on promises made because of the lack of reliable funding could result in violence, re-recruitment of those already disarmed into local and regional conflicts and a breakdown of the peace process;

(k) In view of the legal and moral imperative to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate children associated with armed forces and groups, efforts should be made to ensure that their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are not

contingent on adult disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or the conclusion of broader security sector reform and power sharing negotiations;

(l) Previous disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes often failed to recognize that armed groups were comprised of men, women and children, in both forced and voluntary capacities. Definition of participants and eligibility criteria, therefore, must be culturally and gender sensitive to address the different roles these groups performed during conflicts and to design programmes to meet their different needs. This effort should also recognize the different needs of youth, mentally and/or physically disabled ex-combatants and those associated with armed forces and groups;

(m) Given a number of converging factors, HIV/AIDS and sexual and gender-based violence are widespread in armed conflict and post-conflict environments. Therefore, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must include HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and treatment to reduce stigma and tensions as well as to stem transmission. Adequate psychosocial support must be provided to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Measures should therefore be taken to ensure separation of facilities for women and girls during periods of cantonment, and to improve the infrastructure and security of the camps as a preventive measure. Specialist medical support, in particular gynaecological care and psychosocial support, should be available to women and girls who have been victims of gender-based violence;

(n) Particularly in view of the regional dimensions of many conflicts, it is necessary to enhance the cross-border focus of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. This includes addressing cross-border movements of combatants and weapons (as well as civilians associated with combatants, such as family members and abductees) and finding appropriate durable solutions for these populations in line with international law obligations. Close coordination and linkages should be formed between all disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in a region to ensure programming coherence.

III. New United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

10. In order to ensure that lessons learned are more systematically applied, the Organization has been involved in a process of strengthening its work on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration over the past two years. This has led to a new approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within the United Nations system and a strong commitment among various agencies to improving coordination and effectiveness in this critical area.

11. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration was established by the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and mandated to carry on the work of improving the Organization's performance in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Fifteen departments, agencies, funds and programmes (see the annex to the present report) are represented in the Working Group and together they have developed new policies and concepts for planning and implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations in a peacekeeping context. These policies and concepts are

known as the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards. The Working Group is also working on a training and capacity-building strategy and the piloting of integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in Haiti and the Sudan.

V. Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards

12. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards have been developed by the Inter-Agency Working Group in order to better plan, develop, implement and monitor disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. The standards are divided into 26 modules and are divided into five levels:

(a) Level one provides an introduction to the standards and a glossary;

(b) Level two sets out the strategic concepts of an integrated approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a peacekeeping context;

(c) Level three elaborates on the planning and implementation structures used at Headquarters and in the field;

(d) Level four provides considerations, options and tools for undertaking disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations;

(e) Level five covers the United Nations approach to critical cross-cutting issues, such as gender, youth and children associated with the fighting forces, cross-border movements, food assistance, HIV/AIDS and health.

13. The first draft of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards was discussed in a workshop in Geneva in October 2004 and the second draft was tested in an inter-agency simulation exercise in April/May 2005. A range of non-governmental organizations, regional organizations, national commissions, training institutions and the World Bank have provided input into the standards, which is expected to be officially adopted by the heads of departments, agencies, funds and programmes and launched later in 2006.

14. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards will be supported by an operational handbook, which will provide practitioners with the basic tools required to plan, implement, manage and evaluate disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and a note for senior managers engaged in peace negotiations and in planning, implementing and managing peace operations with a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration component.

15. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards will also be complemented by a web-based United Nations disarmament, demobilization and reintegration resource centre, which will provide comprehensive information on policies, guidelines and procedures and the latest information on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes undertaken by the Organization.

16. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards constitute a common United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a peacekeeping environment, which responds to the new, more complex tasks with which peacekeeping operations are being mandated. This new approach involves integrated planning for effective and efficient decentralized

implementation, the provision of timely, clear and integrated policy guidance and Headquarters support. The standards also recognize that the nature of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration varies from country to country and therefore favours the development of a streamlined means of supporting national needs as opposed to proposing blueprint solutions.

17. While the standards focus on developing a common approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration within the context of peacekeeping operations, they capture the best practice and lessons learned by the whole United Nations system. As such, many of the standards and principles will be applicable in non-peacekeeping operation contexts.

18. The development of the Organization's integrated approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration represents a very important first step towards greater integration by contributing towards:

(a) A common United Nations approach through the consistent application of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards in peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping environments;

(b) Improved planning, communication, coordination and cooperation at Headquarters and in the field;

(c) A coherent and comprehensive basis for the United Nations to engage, consult and advocate on policy and programmatic issues pertaining to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration with different partners, including Member States;

(d) Timely, effective and well-resourced implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes through both assessed and voluntary contributions;

(e) Cooperation between military and civilian training centres providing integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards-based training;

(f) Development of the capacity and knowledge of field-based United Nations staff.

19. This comprehensive approach should be adopted as a means to underpin all future United Nations efforts. However, the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group will continue to capture and reflect on lessons learned from the new and increasingly complex situations in which disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are taking place.

IV. Integrated United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

A. Concept

20. The nature and scope of United Nations disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes have changed significantly in the past five years. However, the overarching goal of the United Nations approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration has remained to enhance security so that post-conflict reconstruction and wider recovery can begin.

21. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are often at the nexus of peacekeeping, post-conflict peacebuilding and development and involve a variety of national and international, military and civilian actors and institutions. They represent only one of many post-conflict peacebuilding interventions and, as such, they must be planned and closely coordinated within the broader political context and recovery efforts.

22. In this regard, it is particularly important to recognize that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must be linked to security sector review and reform. The United Nations must build on the natural linkages and synergy that exists between and among disarmament, demobilization and reintegration on the one hand and security sector reform on the other if a sustainable secure environment is to be established.

B. Definitions

23. In my note of 24 May 2005 on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/59/31), I provided definitions for each stage of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. These definitions, which were subsequently adopted by the General Assembly, are as follows.

24. **Disarmament** is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

25. **Demobilization** is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion.

26. **Reinsertion** is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is a short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year.

27. **Reintegration** is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open timeframe, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance.

C. Principles

28. A number of key principles underpin the United Nations approach to integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. These are outlined in detail in the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards and summarized below.

People-centred

29. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must address the specific needs of the intended participants and beneficiaries. Eligibility criteria must be rigorous, transparent and unambiguous, as well as inclusive enough to cater to women in combat and non-combat roles, children associated with the armed forces and groups and ex-combatants with disabilities, but not so lax as to allow abuse of the programme. Non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment are core principles in both the design and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as is respect for international humanitarian law and the promotion of human rights.

Flexibility

30. The context in which disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes are currently being run is increasingly complex. The United Nations approach must therefore be flexible, adaptable and tailored to the country or region in which it is being implemented. Although the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards lays down policy based on lessons learned, it does not provide a panacea and it must be understood that just as situations vary, so do possible solutions. Therefore, while keeping within the approved policy, programmes will need to be context specific and flexible enough to provide "local solutions to local problems".

Accountability and transparency

31. The United Nations aims to establish transparent mechanisms for the independent monitoring, oversight and evaluation of all disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations and financing mechanisms. Specifically, national authorities and the parties need to be held accountable for implementing their agreements and national and international implementing agencies must be accountable to the participants and beneficiaries. The United Nations system should adhere to the principles and standards for designing and implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and Member States and bilateral partners will be encouraged to provide political and financial support to the process.

Nationally owned

32. The United Nations recognizes that genuine, effective and broad national ownership of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process is important to its successful implementation and critical for the sustainability of the reintegration of ex-combatants. While the United Nations may be called upon to provide strategic, technical, operational and financial support to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the responsibility for moving the process forward

in terms of planning, coordinating and implementing these programmes rests with national and local actors and stakeholders.

33. The United Nations will work to promote national ownership at all phases of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, wherever possible. It is, however, also important to acknowledge the challenges to the full application of the concept of national ownership, in particular at the earliest stages of post-conflict stabilization. National capacity tends to be weak in post-conflict settings and the United Nations must commit to systematically strengthening and developing it. This can be achieved not only by providing technical assistance, training and financial support, but also by bringing the opposing parties together and facilitating the involvement of local authorities, affected communities and combatants and their dependants.

34. National ownership is therefore broader than central government leadership. Genuine national ownership implies the participation of a wide range of State and non-State actors at the national, provincial and local levels, including civil society and women's organizations. Where necessary the United Nations should work with them to strengthen their capacity to participate in the process.

Integrated

35. The United Nations recommends the adoption of an integrated approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Wherever applicable, integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units are to be established to facilitate joint planning, programming and resource mobilization to promote effective decentralized implementation. Strategies across sectors also need to be integrated and a regional approach to the conflict must be adopted.

36. An example of an integrated United Nations approach is the joint mission planned for 1 March 2006, involving the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNMIS to mainstream HIV/AIDS concerns in the Sudan's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy. This will be the first of many field tests of the guidance provided in the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards and illustrates the goal to ensure that such cross-cutting issues as HIV/AIDS, children and gender are mainstreamed throughout the planning process for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration across peacekeeping operations.

Well-planned

37. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must be prepared with careful attention to safety and security; assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation; public information and community sensitization; transition; and exit strategy.

Participants and beneficiaries

38. In conventional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration scenarios, the participants include combatants and those associated with regular and irregular armed forces and groups. Those groups eligible to enter the programme are most

often listed in the ceasefire agreement or peace accord, however, sometimes the political circumstances during the negotiations of a peace agreement may affect the precise definition of factional participation, in particular in the case of militia-type forces. It is then incumbent upon those forces and groups to provide accurate information on the number and location of their members as well as on their weaponry. Civilians and other individuals in possession of illicit small arms should be dealt with under separate weapons control programmes.

39. Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration calls for a nuanced approach to addressing participants. These include male and female adult combatants; youth and children associated with armed forces and groups; ex-combatants with disabilities and chronic illnesses; those working in non-combat roles; and dependants.

40. In its resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council encouraged "all those involved in planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male combatants and ... the needs of their dependants". Experience has shown that women and girls, often excluded from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, are almost always associated with armed forces and groups. Therefore, their presence among fighting forces should be presumed, and preparations undertaken in the planning and design of programmes to that effect, until proven otherwise. Moreover, combatants sometimes share weapons even during active combat, as was the case in Liberia. The policy of individual weapons submission thus fails to take account of this reality.

41. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes should also take into account the receiving communities in areas of return, who need to be consulted during the planning and design phase, as well as informed and supported in receiving ex-combatants and their dependants during the implementation phase. Where ex-combatants receive individual support, this assistance should be limited in scope and delivered, as far as possible, through programmes that benefit the whole community. In this context, beneficiaries of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme ultimately comprise a diverse and wide-ranging group.

V. Implementing an integrated approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

A. Planning

42. Lessons learned from previous disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes suggest that some problems have been caused by poor planning and programme design. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards place particular emphasis on the importance of planning and identify five phases of internal United Nations planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding environment. These are:

(a) **Pre-planning and preparatory assistance**, which includes early identification of potential entry points and strategic options for United Nations support. A decision of whether the United Nations should support or encourage the

establishment of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme should be based on solid political analysis, including an evaluation of the risks involved. Once a decision has been made to support such a programme, further analysis is fundamental to ensuring the capacity to respond efficiently and effectively. This phase also includes, among others providing technical advice during the peace process, exploratory pre-programme assessments and surveys, including on such key issues as women and gender, youth and children, disability and HIV/AIDS, assessing in-country United Nations, national institutional and civil society capacities and the early engagement of donors and other international and local stakeholders;

(b) **Initial technical assessments**, which inform the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration section in those reports that I submit to the Security Council to request the establishment of a peacekeeping mission;

(c) **Development of a strategic and policy framework** for establishing the initial organizational and institutional framework and ensuring that all planned programmes are integrated and adequately reflect the principles of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards;

(d) **Development of a programme and operational framework** through the conduct of detailed field assessments, the development of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and implementation plan;

(e) **Development of a post-mission plan** to ensure that planning for the draw-down of the peacekeeping mission involves the United Nations country team and other critical international and national partners, so as to ensure that the team and the partners have the capacity to continue supporting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme beyond the draw-down. There is also a need to build national capacity so that these authorities are able to assume full responsibility for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

B. Disarmament

43. Lessons learned have shown that the failure to comprehensively disarm former combatants and to develop legislation and policy to manage and control legally and illegally held weapons can seriously undermine long-term peace, stability and recovery efforts. While the disarmament component of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme focuses on controlling the weapons held by ex-combatants, the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards advocate linking the process to wider arms control and reduction measures that address weapons illegally held by civilians, often through weapons amnesty or "weapons for development" programmes. Such arms control and reduction measures should also be closely linked to rule of law and security sector reform programmes.

44. The United Nations recommends that all actors adhere to the principle of automatic destruction of all collected weapons. However, the Government of the country concerned may request that some of the collected weapons be put aside for use by the legitimate security forces as a part of a security sector reform programme. Where weapons are retained for this purpose, the Government must

have developed a clear plan and institutional capacity for the control of the weapons. Otherwise, collected weapons may find their way back onto the streets.

C. Demobilization

45. Demobilization is a multifaceted process, which marks the change of status of a combatant from military to civilian. As the first step towards the reintegration of an ex-combatant into a community, demobilization requires careful integrated planning, timing and sequencing.

46. The demobilization strategy needs to strike a balance between assistance and entitlement so as to avoid any perceptions that combatants are being rewarded for their role in a conflict. This is critical as demobilization programmes that provide large benefits to ex-combatants before they reintegrate into society can cause resentment among the civilian populations, who may view exclusive benefits to ex-combatants as an unjustified reward to the perpetrators of conflict. There is, therefore, a need to rely more on material support, preferably benefiting communities as a whole, and to move away from a focus on monetary incentives. There is also a need to rely more on community-based approaches and move away from a focus on monetary or material incentives and to ensure that the benefits received by demobilizing ex-combatants are in line with those given to other war-affected populations, such as internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees. When monetary incentives are considered necessary, they should be made in small payments over a longer period to more effectively assure a peaceful resettlement.

47. In particular, cash benefits for children should be avoided. In Liberia, the payment of a US$ 300 transitional safety-net allowance had a significantly negative impact on children, who were exposed to abuse and exploitation by their commanders, who wanted a share of the cash benefit. The allowance has impaired the process of reintegration into communities, where the general sentiment is that the children were rewarded for fighting. The allowance may also act as an incentive to join fighting forces in the future, especially in neighbouring countries, where active recruitment of children is often a threat.

48. The United Nations supports the early removal of children from armed forces and groups in compliance with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which makes the recruitment of children below 15 years of age a war crime, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which prohibits signatories from forcefully recruiting children below the age of 18 years. In addition to legal imperatives, ensuring the early release of children can have a positive impact on broader security. The experience of the demobilization of children in Burundi may serve as an example of the positive impact of early demobilization on a peace process. An evaluation of the child disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in Burundi found that the rapid demobilization of children ahead of the demobilization of adults from armed forces and groups signatory to the peace agreement contributed to building confidence, which in turn helped moving the peace process forward.

D. Reintegration

49. Sustainable social and economic reintegration of former combatants should be the ultimate objective of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. Failure to assist ex-combatants to reintegrate will undermine the achievements of the disarmament and demobilization phase, placing the entire programme at risk and increasing instability. However, reintegration represents a particularly complex challenge. Ex-combatants and their societies have often been significantly transformed by wars, especially where conflict has lasted a long time. In some post-conflict countries, ex-combatants will have no experience, or memory, of pre-war peaceful patterns of life. Reintegration is therefore, in some cases, a misnomer.

50. A successful reintegration programme will not only prevent a return to violence, it will also contribute to the recovery and development of a State that is emerging from a conflict. For example, although the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) closed on 31 December 2005, community empowerment programmes that include combatants are continuing, as is a UNDP arms for development programme. If implemented properly, this reintegration programme should be a tool to promote trust and confidence between ex-combatants and receiving communities.

51. In the context of an ongoing conflict, long-term reintegration support can also prevent the re-recruitment of children who may have joined armed groups and forces for reasons related to poverty. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for instance, ensuring children's access to school, catch-up education and vocational training programmes has reduced the likelihood of re-recruitment of some 7,151 children, who have left armed groups and been reunited with their families.

52. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards highlight a number of key principles that should be adhered to when the United Nations is engaged in implementing reintegration programmes. In addition to those principles outlined in paragraphs 28 to 41 above, the following are seen as particularly important:

(a) *Start planning for reintegration as soon as possible*. United Nations practitioners must begin preparing for reintegration at the outset;

(b) *Develop national capacity*. Reintegration programmes should seek to develop the capacities of receiving communities, as well as local and national authorities;

(c) *Situate reintegration within a wider recovery strategy*. Reintegration programming must be conceptualized, designed, planned in coherence with the wider recovery strategy;

(d) *Balance equity and security*. While adherence to the principle of equity among all war-affected groups will increase the chances of reconciliation, the security situation often dictates that, in the short term at least, a specific focus on ex-combatants is required in order to assure enhanced and consolidated security. One key issue is to ensure that the receiving communities are adequately consulted and understand and accept that targeted support to ex-combatants will enhance their own security;

(e) *Ensure a timely transition from supporting individuals to supporting communities*. To achieve the security objectives of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, support should be given for full initial reintegration of the ex-combatants. However, in the context of longer-term reintegration, a balance must be struck between supporting ex-combatants' specific needs and the needs of the wider community in order to prevent feelings of resentment between the two groups. Emphasis should be placed on moving quickly from ex-combatant-specific programmes to community-based and national development programmes.

53. Although reintegration programmes should adhere to these principles, the different political, socio-economic and security contexts in which they are implemented will require a context specific approach. This could include a mix of reintegration strategies, for example combining a tailored, individually focused reintegration strategy for ex-combatants with an approach that addresses the main priorities of the receiving communities, for instance by providing them with tools and capacities to support the reintegration of ex-combatants and associated groups, together with internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees and other vulnerable groups.

54. Reintegration benefits must also be tailored, based on the gender, age, educational qualifications and physical ability of the recipient. The role of women and girls in providing care for demobilized combatants, especially those who are underaged, traumatized, disabled or chronically ill, must be recognized and supported. Women and girls shoulder an enormous burden of care in most post-conflict societies, the increase of which may lead to women being unable to participate in public life and girls being unable to attend school. Youth in particular represent a high percentage of combatants, and require assistance to meet both their immediate needs and long-term goals.

55. Lastly, experiences of the demobilization and reintegration processes, as well as the failures of past peace processes in, for example, Liberia, underline the need to give special consideration to providing tailored reintegration support for demobilized former faction leaders. These represent a key group in the factional command and control chain that needs to be broken up so as to ensure the dissolution of the faction structures, thereby guaranteeing the sustainability of the demobilization.

E. Funding disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

56. One of the main problems encountered in past United Nations disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations is the absence of adequate, timely and sustained funding. This has frequently resulted in a gap between disarmament and demobilization on the one hand, which are relatively easy to fund, plan and implement, and reintegration on the other, which is dependent on voluntary contributions and on expertise and conditions that are not always present in a timely manner in a post-conflict environment. Voluntary funds take time to raise and disburse. In some cases, former combatants who had been disarmed on the promise of reintegration opportunities found that there were no programmes to enter when demobilized. As I stated in my seventh progress report on UNMIL of 16 June 2005 (S/2005/391, para. 19), "the most serious threat to stability [of the peace process] came from ex-combatants awaiting reintegration opportunities" and that "continued

delays in providing these idle ex-combatants with reintegration opportunities have them open to exploitation by manipulative political elements, particularly during the electoral period".

57. This problem can be addressed if reintegration programmes are properly planned, in close coordination with donors, and are adequately resourced at the outset.

58. In the past, the fragmented approach of the United Nations system to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration often resulted in poorly planned and synchronized resource mobilization activities and duplication of administrative structures. This has diminished donor confidence in such programmes.

59. The move towards integration across the United Nations will help to address some of these obstacles. In particular, the General Assembly, in its resolution 59/296, clarified the use of the regular budget for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration during peacekeeping operations.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

60. The United Nations has continuously been called upon to implement or support national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts both as a part of peacekeeping operations and in non-peacekeeping contexts. This trend is likely to continue into the future and if the Organization is to be successful in meeting these challenges, it will have to work in a concerted manner, not only across the United Nations system, but also with national Governments and donor partners, the World Bank, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations.

61. The departments, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system that make up the Inter-Agency Working Group will continue to work to improve the Organization's ability to support successful and sustainable disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. Outlined below are their recommendations on the proposed way forward.

Integrated programme support

62. Headquarters would ensure additional support to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in the field. The Inter-Agency Working Group would continue to strengthen and consolidate the partnership it has built up over the past two years. Building on the existing secretariat, an integrated, inter-agency United Nations disarmament, demobilization and reintegration capacity is required to provide ongoing policy development, strategic advice, support and training to country programmes. This body would also engage with partners outside the United Nations, assist with training, resource mobilization and planning, and provide support to current and future disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. The existing secretariat should therefore be expanded to include additional staff from other departments, agencies, funds and programmes and mandated to provide wider support to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

Implementation of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards

63. With the launch of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards later in 2006, a key priority would be to implement the standards at the country level. The United Nations has begun to pilot the standards through the formation of integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units in MINUSTAH and UNMIS and the joint training of their military, police and civilian personnel. The United Nations system would continue to test this new approach in Haiti and the Sudan. It would also implement it in other ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in both peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping contexts and ensure that new programmes were developed in line with the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards.

64. Implementation of an integrated approach would require the establishment of new coordination mechanisms which could include all or some of the following:

(a) *Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration teams* staffed jointly by personnel of UNDP and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as other agencies, such as those in Haiti and the Sudan;

(b) *A United Nations country team disarmament, demobilization and reintegration steering group* to facilitate the exchange of information, joint planning and operations within the peacekeeping mission and with the country team.

65. One lesson that has already been learned from these nascent units is that, given the different administrative and financial procedures, as well as implementation modalities adopted by the agencies involved, it is not possible to insist on complete operational/administrative integration. Instead, the goal should be to complement each other in a mutually reinforcing way to complete integration at the planning level and to ensure the efficient and timely coordination of operations within the framework of a joint plan. Such arrangements should, where possible, be formalized so as to ensure, for instance, administrative and financial clarity.

Addressing institutional constraints

66. Integration, especially at the country level, is constrained by administrative, managerial, budgetary and operational challenges. These challenges must be overcome if the new approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is to be achieved. It is therefore recommended that:

(a) Efforts be made to continue to build an organizational culture receptive to integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and units through the continued provision of joint training, missions etc.;

(b) The departments, agencies, funds and programmes that have contributed to the development of the Organization's new approach to

disarmament, demobilization and reintegration participate further in integrated planning, implementation and evaluations and, whenever possible, participate in the joint units at the country level;

(c) The United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group secretariat and members look into ways of overcoming administrative and other obstacles to implementing the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards and establishing integrated mechanisms.

The development of policies and tools

67. The integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards constitute a "living document". Feedback from the country level and from other partners would ultimately result in a second edition of the standards. In anticipation, the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group would continue to address potential gaps in policy guidance in such areas as the linkages to rule of law programming, security sector reform and broader recovery processes. The Working Group would also develop practical tools, such as pre-programming assessments and impact evaluations.

68. Given the fact that the United Nations system is heavily engaged in non-peacekeeping contexts, the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group would also work to ensure that the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards could be applied in these settings.

Maintaining and developing the online resource centre

69. The online resource centre would have to be maintained and further developed to remain a useful tool for policymakers and practitioners both at Headquarters and the country levels. Apart from consolidating information and lessons learned on past and current programmes, it should also function as a communication and exchange platform for those working on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration issues. This would require further voluntary funding, which I would encourage Member States to provide.

Training and capacity development within the United Nations

70. In the coming year, the United Nations will continue its efforts to provide training and capacity development support to its staff and to national counterparts on the policies and principles enshrined in the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards. To this end, during a February 2006 workshop on international training in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, several peacekeeping training institutes and centres agreed to use the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards as the basis for future courses on this subject. In addition to generic training, the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group will work to provide tailored trainings in countries like Haiti and the Sudan, where the integrated approach is being piloted.

Strengthening partnerships

71. A core principle of the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards is that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration requires strong partnership among a range of international and national actors. As outlined above, the United Nations would support strong national ownership throughout. In addition, a key priority in the coming years would be to strengthen and consolidate partnerships with the World Bank, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations.

72. Finally, the process of developing the integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards in itself provides a good lesson for the United Nations ahead of the establishment of the peacebuilding commission. In developing this new approach, the Organization has managed to line up conceptual, operational and institutional thinking, providing a good template for operationalizing other areas of peacebuilding.

73. In keeping with the spirit of my programme to reform the United Nations, this new approach to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration would at times require a change in the way the Organization works. However, its impact would be considerable. The benefits would enable more successful, better coordinated and managed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations, which in turn would help to advance peace processes, promote economic recovery and sustainable development.

Notes

[1] See www.womenwarpeace.org/issues/ddr/ddr.htm.

Annex

Members of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization And Reintegration

Department of Disarmament Affairs

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Department of Political Affairs

Department of Public Information

International Labour Organization

International Organization for Migration

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

United Nations Children's Fund

United Nation Development Programme

United Nations Development Fund for Women

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

United Nations Population Fund

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

World Food Programme

World Health Organization